



OFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Newsletter – February 2024



Kent County Council

Full details of Cllr Hohler's report are in the Meeting Minutes.



Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Cllr Tatton attended the Parish Council meeting.

A TMBC Press Release about fly tipping is available at <https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/news/article/124/fly-tippers-and-litter-bugs-to-face-heftier-fines> and is also included later in the newsletter.

Police

Our Community Police Officer Dylan McElligott has attended the village at school time, maintaining a visible presence to deter anyone from driving the wrong way along North Meadow to access the field parking. He noted that several cars did slow and hesitate as they drove past.

He plans to attend again, but this time he will be more covert to see if people then decide to drive the wrong way.

The Parish Council will continue to work with the police and Kent Highways to look at solutions to the problem of cars driving the wrong way along North Meadow.

Highways

The Parish Council continues to work with Kent Highways on the Highways Improvement Plan.

Cllr Bailey is leading this.

Speedwatch

A report from Fred Steer is included later in the newsletter.

This is being run independently of the Parish Council, and KCC have funded the Speedwatch equipment for the group to use.

If you would like to take part or would like more information, please contact fred.steer@offham-pc.gov.uk.

Faults and Reports and Useful Contacts

The Parish Council has published this useful list on its website and at the end of this newsletter.

Parish Council and Village Events

- Annual Parish Meeting – Offham Village Hall – Friday 5th April 2024
- Offham Parish Council Race Night, with Malling Lions – Saturday 27th April 2024
- Men's Shed – The Kings Arms, every Thursday 10am-11.30am
- Offham Food Bank – every other Monday from Kings Arms (offhamvillagehall@outlook.com)

Recreation Ground Refurbishment – Phase One



Phase One of the works, which are being carried out to improve the Recreation ground, began at the end of January. We have worked closely with the contractor to ensure the minimum of disruption for everyone. Work began with an upgrade to the perimeter track and will take 2-3 weeks. They will also be laying the slabs for a Football Shelter, Chess Table and Table Tennis Table.

Our contractor has confirmed they will begin installing the Agility Net, Agility Trail and the Chess Table on Monday 18th March. This has been slightly delayed as the Football Shelter has been on a longer delivery schedule.

The Table Tennis Table will be delivered sometime in between these dates.

Exciting graphics to the track will be installed once other works are completed to ensure they are not damaged.

Play Area Refurbishment – Phase Two

Phase Two of the works is to replace the equipment in the enclosed play area. We have applied for grant funding from FCC Environment but will not find out if we are successful until sometime after 14th March. Fingers crossed!

Offham Solar Park

Cllr Sue Taylor has met with Infinis to discuss work to the Solar Park, on the Offham Landfill Site. Infinis have been on the site for over 20 years, and the Solar Park will be there for another 30 years, so they are well established and keen to work closely with the village. They want to support local business wherever possible.

They will provide us with a timeline of the work which we will share with you, but in summary:

- Infinis are well established having been in the village for over 20 years and they will be there for another 30 years. They want to work with everyone and build as sympathetically as possible.
- They want to support local businesses
- Work should begin on the compound in Mid Feb/March.
- Panels should start being installed from April.

- About 60 vehicle movements in total for the panels and no more than 10 a day. There will be peaks and troughs of vehicle movements.
- They are not anticipating any problems with vehicle movements as there is an established route from the motorway and established access onto the site. They do not need to construct a new access because of the quarry and landfill
- They agree a Construction Traffic Management Plan which will be given to all hauliers to travel from the motorway, to Seven Mile Lane and along Teston Road. There will be an Infnis Community Email communityengagement@infnis.com including a reference to Offham Solar and any lorries taking the wrong route should be reported to Infnis so they can speak to the Haulier. Signage will also be put up
- The build profile is 6 months. The majority of the work should be done in 3-4 months.
- There will be some noise from piling in the pins, and the framework installation (impact guns used). This may take 2 ½ months and they won't use big piling rigs.
- Once up and running the site will be low maintenance. There will not be someone on site full time. Site can be monitored remotely with SCADA systems.
- Site operates Monday – Friday 7am to 6pm and Saturday 7.30am to 1pm. No work Sunday
- The footpath will be reinstated at end of the build and after landscaping.
- FCC is the landowner and lease this site to Infnis. FCC is responsible for landscaping at the edges.
- There is a website www.offhamsolarpark.co.uk

Hole in Village Green



The hole in the Village Green was created by UKPN as part of their works to connect Woodmans. Unfortunately, the repair of the hole was missed off their repair schedule. UKPN apologised when Cllr Taylor spoke to them and the hole has now been repaired.

2025 Offham Calendar

Cllr Williams has started work on the 2025 Offham Calendar – details later in the newsletter. Please send any suitable photos, which should be **landscape**, to clerk@offham-pc.gov.uk by **31st March 2024**.

Mens Shed

Offham Parish Council is very proud to have set up Men's Shed in the village and is incredibly grateful to Matt Scullion and his team at, The Kings Arms for their help and support from the start. This is such an important meeting group.

At first, the Parish Council entirely funded Men's Shed to encourage men to attend. The cost is £20 per week for tea, coffee and biscuits, and The Kings Arms generously provide the venue for free. Since the start, the Parish Council has paid over £1,100 for Men's Shed.

Over time, a contribution has been sought from those attending towards the running costs. The Parish Council invites those attending Men's Shed to pay £2 per session. It is hoped this will make it self-funding. This is a VOLUNTARY contribution. If you cannot pay or unable to pay the full amount you can still take part. The Parish Council will pay for any shortfall.

Women's Shed

Cllr Steer is the representative for Wellbeing in the Village. He is looking to set up a Women's Shed. Matt Scullion has again kindly offered use of the Kings Arms on either a Monday or Tuesday from 10am -11am. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided. A £2 donation per person will be sought, but this will be a VOLUNTARY contribution only.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Cllr Steer – fred.steer@offham-pc.gov.uk

Contact the Parish Council E: clerk@offham-pc.gov.uk T: 07563 606573. The Parish Council Clerk works 12 hours a week, Monday to Thursday, and aims to respond to emails and phone calls within 5 working days. For more information, please go to our website www.offham-pc.gov.uk

Offham Parish Council Meetings

The next meeting will be **Tuesday 5th March 2024** at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Committee Room.

SPEEDWATCH



Offham Community SpeedWatch (CSW) is now live.

Following a visit from Alan Watson, our coordinator at Kent Police, visiting yesterday, to deliver both the second part of our coaching and a Speed Indicator Device (SID) which is on loan pending our own unit arriving towards the end of this month we are able, with immediate effect, to start roadside sessions for SpeedWatch.

A number of volunteers sent their apologies for absence due to holiday commitments however I am able to deliver this coaching which can be completed in groups or individually so, please, call me to arrange a convenient time to book this in. This shouldn't take more than 30 minutes of your time.

In my last newsletter I had a couple of asks, most importantly for the online accreditation to be completed. Again, this shouldn't take more than 45 minutes, if you are not confident navigating the CSW site let me know and I will gladly come and help. Secondly, can you advise me of your availability as I need to start putting together a rota for our sessions which I would like to start sooner rather than later.

On the upside sunrise is getting earlier and dusk later giving us the opportunity for flexibility when scheduling our sessions not to mention it is a few degrees warmer (at the moment). Quite a few locals, I speak with, note that drivers, they believe, need educating through SpeedWatch use Teston Road and Church Road at either end of the day which is another good reason for us to get up and running as soon as we can.

In the last week we have met Offham's new Police Constable who has already made 2 business visits, the first to uphold the NO ENTRY from Church Road into North Meadow and, last Thursday with his radar gun to target speeding vehicles along Teston Road. This is a great asset and he is making himself available for further stints at key points in the village.

I look forward to hearing from you with any questions or concerns which I will gladly address.

Best wishes

Fred

OFFHAM VILLAGE CALENDAR 2025

We are looking for photographs of Offham to use in the 2025 calendar.

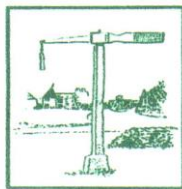
Pictures must be landscape.

Please send images to

clerk@offham-pc.gov.uk

By 31st March

**All proceeds from the calendar will go
towards Village Projects**





Offham Parish Council

Race Night

Saturday 27th April

7.30pm

At Offham Village Hall

£15 to include a light supper

Bring your own drink and glasses

For tickets please call Sue Williams

07732 267121

All profits will go towards village projects.



Run by The Malling Lions



Tonbridge & Malling health walks are free, fun and friendly - perfect to help you get active, meet new people and improve mental health and well being.

Platt Walk

Where: St Marys Platt Church, TN15 8NE
When: Every **Monday**
Walk starts: 10am outside the church
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes
(Walk may include hills)

Hildenborough Walk

Where: Recreational Ground, TN11 9HY
When: Every **1st and 3rd Monday**
Walk starts: 10am from car park
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes
(Walk may include stiles)

Leybourne Walk

Where: Leybourne Lakes Country Park, ME20
When: Every **Tuesday**
Walk starts: 10am main car park
Walk lasts: 60-90 or 30 minute walks available

Tonbridge Walks

Where: Tonbridge Pool, TN9 1HR
When: Every **Wednesday**
Walk starts: 10:15am from main entrance
Walk lasts: 30 minutes

Where: Tonbridge Pool, TN9 1HR
When: Every **Wednesday**
Walk starts: 11am from main entrance
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes
(Walk may include stiles)

Leybourne Walk

Where: Leybourne Lakes Country Park ME20 6AA
When: Every **Thursday**
Walk starts: 10am from the main car park
Walk lasts: 60 or 30 minute walks available

Hadlow Walk

Where: Hadlow Square, TN11 0DA
When: Every **Thursday**
Walk starts: 10:30am opposite the pharmacy
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes
(Walk may include stiles)

Snodland Walk

Where: Snodland Medical Practice, ME6 5SN
When: Every **Thursday**
Walk starts: 11:30am outside medical practice
Walk lasts: 45-60 minutes

East Malling Walk

Where: East Malling Centre, ME19 6SD
When: Every **Friday**
Walk starts: 11:00am from the centre café
Walk lasts: 60-90 minutes

ONE YOU KENT

Phone: 01732 876 347

Visit: tmbc.gov.uk/community/health-one/3

Email: healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk

Volunteers needed!

Tonbridge & Malling health walks are free, fun and friendly - perfect to help you get active, meet new people and improve mental health and well being.



Why we want you

Our aim is to give people the confidence to get out walking and enjoying the outdoors in a safe way and help people be healthier. To do this we need people to share their enthusiasm for the benefits of walking with others in their community by leading walks in your local area.

You'll work with the Coordinator and other Walk Leaders in your area to deliver a range of accessible walks that enable people to bring activity into their lives and feel the benefits. We want everyone to have access to a short, friendly group walk within easy reach of where they live to help them become and stay healthy.

Get in touch by emailing healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk or call 01732 876347



ONE YOU KENT





GRAFFITI AND STREET ART CONSULTATION

We are currently running a consultation to get resident's views on our work to tackle graffiti.

Graffiti is defined as writing or drawings scribbled, scratched or sprayed illegally on a wall or other surface in a public place. This can be seen in many towns and villages across the country but unfortunately we have also seen a small increase in Tonbridge & Malling. We would like to get resident's views on graffiti and whether they have seen an increase in the borough. This will help us develop our plans around how we tackle this subject. As part of this we may look to develop graffiti walls. A graffiti wall is an area that has been set aside to allow people to legally 'tag'. Below is the link to the survey for you to share as appropriate.

[Graffiti and street art consultation – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council \(tmbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.tmbc.gov.uk)

**HELPING
TONBRIDGE & MALLING
GET DIGITAL**

You could be eligible to access free:

- Gifted 2-in-1 laptop
- Digital skills sessions
- One to one digital support

This is available for Tonbridge & Malling residents over the age of 16 and digitally excluded, that meet one of the following criteria:

- In or at-risk of financial hardship.
- Unemployed and seeking employment.
- Looking to develop skills to support employment or career development.
- Aged 16 to 18 (up to 25 with an EHCP) and not in education, employment or training.

Full eligibility details and how to apply is available at www.digitalkent.uk or call 03000 410 950.

Funded by UK Government

LEVELLING UP

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Kent County Council

Guided group walks – March 2024



Our friendly group is one of 13 Ramblers groups in Kent and part of the national Ramblers walking organisation. We explore the beautiful countryside of Tonbridge and Malling and surrounding areas.

You don't have to be a Ramblers member to try up to three 'taster' walks with us. If you're new to our walks, please contact the walk leader to check that their walk will suit you.

Chagall East Window at Tudeley Church – 14 March walk

For details of these and other upcoming walks and walk leaders, see our [Facebook page](#) or visit www.tonbridgeandmallinghamblers.org.uk.

Sunday 3 March	Circular walk from Platt along the Wealdway through Shipbourne Forest and return via Mereworth Woods. Some short sections of quiet lane walking. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 miles
Wednesday 6 March	A circular meander through Mereworth Woods to Gover Hill returning via Herne Pound. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 miles
Thursday 14 March	Tudeley and Capel 'special churches' walk via Capel Church with its 13th century wall paintings and All Saints Tudeley, the only church in the world to have all its stained-glass windows designed by the celebrated 20th century artist, Marc Chagall. Moderate difficulty with 10 stiles.	6.5 miles
Sunday 17 March	Horsmonden to Broad Ford and Brandfield through orchards, fields and farm tracks. Great views of the High Weald, Greensand Ridge and the Teise and Medway river valleys. Some quiet lanes; some stiles and hills; moderate difficulty.	5 miles
Thursday 21 March	Heaverham Hike: circular walk with a steep ascent at the start to the North Downs Way with far-reaching views. Four stiles; moderate difficulty.	5 miles
Sunday 24 March	Circular walk from Wrotham up to Stansted for a bird's eye view over the Weald. Steep climb at the beginning out of Wrotham. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 miles
Thursday 28 March	Circular walk from Barming along the banks of The Medway to Wateringbury, returning via Kettle Bridge with wonderful river views. Some road walking; moderate difficulty.	6 miles

Walks usually start mid-morning. There's a short half-way break (bring refreshments) and we usually finish near a pub. Most walks are dog-friendly (see website).

Fly-tippers and litter bugs to face heftier fines



Dropping rubbish on the streets could cost you £500

Councillors have recommended an increase in the penalties for littering and fly-tipping in Tonbridge and Malling.

Changes to government legislation allow councils to increase the maximum fixed penalty for littering from £150 to £500. The maximum for fly-tipping has risen from £400 to £1,000.

Members of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee meeting on 7 February considered a range of increases that could now be adopted to deter people from dropping or dumping rubbish. A report set out four options, ranging from keeping penalties at current levels to adopting the new maximum for both types of offence.

The committee voted to support a two-tier approach to littering fines and moving to the maximum of £1,000 for fly-tipping. First time or small scale littering offences would attract a penalty of £250, or £125 if paid early, rising to the maximum of £500 for larger items or repeat offences.

The increase follows a pilot scheme with enforcement specialists, NES, which deploys officers in towns and villages across the borough to issue penalties for littering and investigate fly tips. The pilot is one of a range of measures contributing to the council's work to care for the environment, one of four [strategic priorities](#) set out in its corporate plan.

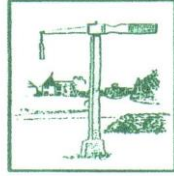
The trial scheme saw more than 3,400 fines issued during its first twelve months. Figures for 2022-2023, show Tonbridge and Malling recorded 833 incidents of fly-tipping and issued 83 fixed penalty notices for that offence, more than any other authority in Kent. [In June 2023](#), councillors agreed to extend the trial so a permanent contractor could be appointed.

Cllr Martin Coffin, cabinet lead for transformation and infrastructure, said: 'When we prepared the report and looked at the options we had, we wanted to send a strong message. Everyone agrees that fly-tipping is absolutely abhorrent, so we will be making it widely known that that the fine for anyone caught doing it in Tonbridge and Malling will now be £1,000.'

Referring to comments from committee members about the need for enforcement officers to exercise discretion when dealing with littering, he added: 'We can also ensure that the operatives are trained so that they can understand the difference between an accidental and deliberate littering.'

The changes are due to be implemented when a new fly-tipping and litter enforcement contract starts later this year.

SAVE THE DATE



OFFHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Friday April 5th 2024

OFFHAM VILLAGE HALL
7.15pm for 7.30pm start

This is an important meeting, in which all residents are welcome to participate.

Further details will follow but the meeting will include a Parish Council Update, presentation of the KALC and Offham Community Awards and public question time.

Please note that this is a Village Meeting and not a Parish Council AGM.



THE OFFHAM PICTURE HOUSE SATURDAY, 2nd MARCH 2024

“TOP END WEDDING”



Australia: Lauren and Ned are engaged and happy. Then their world is turned upside down when something happens, and they have 10 days to plan and marry. Her mother has left her father and disappeared somewhere in the Northern Territory not knowing of this sudden change. They embark on an epic road trip across northern Australia to find her, reunite her parents and have their dream Top End Wedding. As they travel through the wild beauty of the landscapes and their most spectacular features, they meet unforgettable characters, and we go with them on the journey.

A gentle comedy which gives us a fascinating insight in the people and the country, whilst we sit back and enjoy.

Doors will open at **6.00.pm** and Refreshments will be served until **6.50.pm**. Payable by cash or card.

Dinner will be served at 7.00.pm. Usual intermission during the film for **Refreshments and Raffle.**

Admission is **£10.00** per person, to include a **Movie Meal** if required.

Please email: **Caroline:** offhamcinema@aol.com

with your booking, names of party, if **Movie Meals** are required, and **method of payment made by 6.00.pm on Wednesday, 28th February.**

Payment to be made on or before the closing date.

BACS:

NAT WEST BANK OFFHAM VILL HLL a/c 64668576 sort code 55-81-07

CHEQUE

OFFHAM VILLAGE HALL and sent/delivered to: Valerie at 3 Manor Cottages, Teston Road, Offham. ME19 5NF (corner of Teston & Church Roads) by the closing date.

Whatever the weather here, you can escape for an evening of sunshine and smiles, please join us,

Valerie and Janette and Caroline



USEFUL CONTACTS

KENT HIGHWAYS

Report a problem on a road or pavement. You can report non-urgent issues online including: street light faults, potholes, drainage, traffic signal faults, overgrown vegetation (including hedges and grass).

www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem

To report any emergency issues outside of normal office hours (Monday - Friday, 9am till 5pm), please telephone 03000 41 91 91.



PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

You can report non-urgent issues online including: broken stiles, overgrown vegetation or fallen trees, damaged or dangerous path surfaces, damaged or missing signposts.

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-on-a-right-of-way>



TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

You can report issues about refuse collections, fly tipping and litter and street cleaning.

waste.services@tmbc.gov.uk

Customer.services@tmbc.gov.uk

Telephone 01732 844522



OFFHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Contact Simon Mahoney – simonmahoneyuk@outlook.com



COUNTRY EYE

Country Eye App – “helping to keep the Kent countryside safe”. You can, amongst other things, report fly tipping

www.countryeye.co.uk



MY COMMUNITY VOICE

This is a new method of communicating with the local police and for them to contact all or specific communities

- [HTTPS://WWW.MYCOMMUNITYVOICEKENT.CO.UK/](https://www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk/)





POLICE

Emergency 999.

Call 999 if:

- a serious offence is in progress or has just been committed
- someone is in immediate danger or harm
- property is in danger of being damaged
- a serious disruption to the public is likely

You can also text 'Police' to 60066 if you're deaf or hard of hearing.

Silent 999 calls - If you're in danger but you can't talk on the phone, you should still call 999, then [follow the instructions:](https://www.kent.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us/us/contact-us/how-to-make-a-silent-999-call/) (https://www.kent.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us/us/contact-us/how-to-make-a-silent-999-call/) depending on whether you're calling from a mobile or a landline.

Non-emergency 101. Call 101 for non-emergency enquiries.
You can also text 'Police' to 60066 if you're deaf or hard of hearing.

Anti-terrorist hotline 0800 789 321. Call the UK Anti-Terrorism Hotline if you've seen or heard something that you think could suggest terrorist activity.

Report online at www.kent.police.uk

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS



Motorways and Major A Road problems - To Report a problem on the network - <https://report.nationalhighways.co.uk/>

General Enquiries - info@nationalhighways.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 123 5000



OFFHAM LANDFILL SITE

FCC	24 Hour Emergency Number	01302 553461		
FCC	Michael Ross	07514932598	Site Manager	michael.ross@fccenvironment.co.uk
Infinis	Logistics Centre	01604 662420 Option 1		Gas compound and Gas Infrastructure



OFFHAM SOLAR PARK

Contact: communityengagement@infinis.com

BLAISE FARM QUARRY



- Bill Bowley, Quarry Manager at Gallagher - bill.bowley@gallagher-group.co.uk

BLAISE FARM IVC

- Blaise Landline – 01732 873215 (07.00 – 17.30)
- blaise.admin@newearthgroup.co.uk
- Shelley Stimson, SHEQ Officer – 07551 464847, shelley.Stimson@newearthgroup.co.uk
- Neil Winchester, Site Manager - neil.winchester@newearthgroup.co.uk, 07540 924626.

BLAISE FARM AD PLANT



- Darren Smith, Environmental & Compliance Manager - d.smith@b-ne.uk

BLAISE FARM

You should contact the **operator** about any concerns first since they are best able to respond to queries and address any issues that may arise. If this does not secure a satisfactory outcome you should then contact **KCC** for issues relating to the permitted minerals (quarrying) and waste management development and the **Environment Agency** who have issued the Environmental Permits and are the Primary Regulator.

- Kent County Council (Minerals and Waste Planning): planning.applications@kent.gov.uk
- In order for the Environment Agency to act upon and hold a formal record of complaints please report all complaints to their incident reporting line which is **0800 80 70 60**.
- Environment Agency - enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

If you are making complaints to KCC and the Environment Agency it would be useful to also copy in:

- [Kent County Council](#) Councillor Sarah Hohler - sarah.hohler@kent.gov.uk
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council - environmental.protection@tmbc.gov.uk
- [Trudy Dean, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Councillor](#) – trudy.dean@tmbc.gov.uk
- [Roger Roud, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Councillor](#) – roger.roud@tmbc.gov.uk
- [Michelle Tatton, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Councillor](#) – michelle.tatton@tmbc.gov.uk
- [Offham Parish Council](#) – clerk@offham-pc.gov.uk

Please do not copy all emails to KCC, TMBC and the EA, but contact the sites in the first instance.

For the waste sites it may not be clear which plant is responsible for the issues you are concerned about, so it is suggested that you report to both the IVC Site and the AD Site who will be able to identify which is responsible.